

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Final Office Action dated October 28, 2011. This amendment is timely filed.

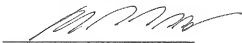
At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-19, 24 and 38-40 were pending in the application. In the Office Action, claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,488,684 to Bramlet et al. in view of US Patent Publication No. 2005/0187555 to Biedermann et al. Claims 19, 24 and 38-40 were allowed, and claim 18 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but was indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Although applicant disagrees with the Examiner's assessment of patentability of the claims, claims 1-15, 17 and 18 have been cancelled herein purely in the interests of expeditious prosecution. Amended claim 16 incorporates the subject matter of cancelled claims 17 and 18. All claims are in condition for allowance.

Applicant has made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is thus believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicant invites the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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